



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
LANSING

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

JAMES K. HAVEMAN  
DIRECTOR

January 13, 2014

Dear Community Partner,

You are receiving this information as a Michigan partner who can play a critical role in helping to keep Michigan's youth athletes safe from the dangers of sports concussions.

As you may be aware, new laws went into place on June 30, 2013 to provide directives on this important issue. In an effort to help inform our communities and partners on the roles and responsibilities that manifest with this new law, we are providing you with this letter, which you are encouraged to share with other partners as you deem appropriate.

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) has developed a website with information and resources to help people who are involved in youth sports, along with parents and young athletes, to comply with the law, and learn more about sports concussions: [www.michigan.gov/sportsconcussion](http://www.michigan.gov/sportsconcussion). This web site offers links to the laws themselves, as well as tools, information pieces, and trainings that are essential to compliance. A checklist is printed on the back of this letter for your convenience, and a link to this checklist may also be found on the MDCH sports concussion web site. There is also a "frequently asked questions" or FAQ link, where answers to the most common questions are posted to help our communities navigate this new law.

We, along with the Brain Injury Association of Michigan appreciate all that you do to help keep Michigan's young athletes active and safe. If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me at my information below.

Sincerely,

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This mailing was made possible by a grant from Safe Kids Worldwide ([www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org))





# **Michigan's Sports Concussion Law: Compliance Checklist**

Effective June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013

- ☐ **Learn about the new law and how it affects you and your organization.**  
Please visit [www.michigan.gov/sportsconcussion](http://www.michigan.gov/sportsconcussion).
- ☐ **Plan how this new law will be implemented in your organization before it sponsors or operates an athletic activity in which youth athletes will participate.**  
Understand what is required and make sure those provisions are implemented.
- ☐ **Ensure that required training is completed.**  
Coaches, employees, volunteers, and other adults who are involved with a youth athletic activity sponsored by or operated under the auspices of the organizing entity must complete a concussion awareness on-line training program.
- ☐ **Provide educational materials to youth athletes and parents.**  
The organizing entity is responsible for providing educational materials to each youth athlete who participates in a sponsored athletic activity and their parents/guardians.
- ☐ **Document and maintain receipt of educational materials by youth athletes and parents.**  
The organizing entity should obtain a signed statement by each youth athlete and parent/guardian that acknowledges receipt of educational materials on concussions and their consequences. Signed statements should be maintained in a permanent file for the duration of the youth athlete's participation in the athletic activity or until the youth athlete is 18 years of age.
- ☐ **Immediately remove from play any youth athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion.**  
The coach or other adult employed by, volunteering for or acting on behalf of the organizing entity during an athletic event sponsored or operated by that entity shall **immediately remove** an athlete from physical participation who is suspected of sustaining a concussion during the athletic activity.  
  
An athletic activity means a program or event, including practice and competition, during which youth athletes participate or practice to participate in an organized athletic game or competition against another team, club, entity or individual. Athletic activity includes participation in physical education classes that are part of a school curriculum.
- ☐ **Before returning a youth athlete to play, obtain written clearance from an appropriate health professional.**  
The youth athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion is not allowed to return to any physical activity until they have been evaluated by an appropriate health professional and must receive written clearance from an appropriate health professional authorizing return to physical activity.  
  
The organizing entity shall maintain the Written Clearance to Return to Play Forms in a permanent file for the duration of the participation of the youth athlete in a physical activity or until the youth athlete is over 18 years of age.
- ☐ **Keep information and resources about the law on hand.**  
Information about the law and resources are available at: [www.michigan.gov/sportsconcussion](http://www.michigan.gov/sportsconcussion).



# CONCUSSION FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION?

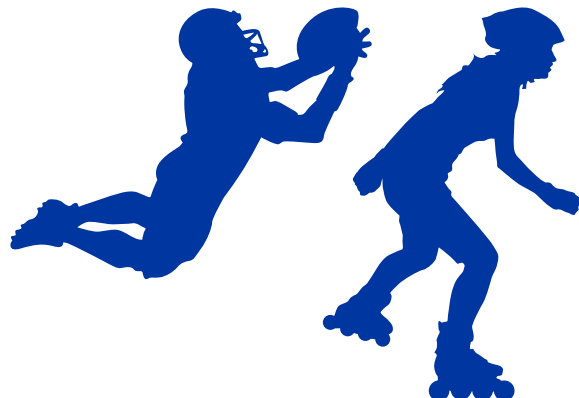
If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs of a concussion:

### SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE:

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”

### SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS/ GUARDIANS:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes





## DANGER SIGNS

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Be alert for symptoms that worsen over time. Your child or teen should be seen in an emergency department right away if s/he has:

- One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other
- Drowsiness or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Difficulty recognizing people or places
- Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

## HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION OR OTHER SERIOUS BRAIN INJURY?

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- Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be well maintained.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of a serious brain injury or skull fracture.
  - However, helmets are not designed to prevent concussions. There is no "concussion-proof" helmet. So, even with a helmet, it is important for kids and teens to avoid hits to the head.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

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1. **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY.**  
A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, including sports.
2. **KEEP YOUR CHILD OUT OF PLAY.**  
Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon - while the brain is still healing - risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Repeat or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. **TELL YOUR CHILD'S COACH ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION.**  
Coaches should know if your child had a previous concussion. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL SAFELY AFTER A CONCUSSION?

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Children and teens who return to school after a concussion may need to:

- Take rest breaks as needed
- Spend fewer hours at school
- Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments
- Receive help with schoolwork
- Reduce time spent reading, writing, or on the computer

Talk with your child's teachers, school nurse, coach, speech-language pathologist, or counselor about your child's concussion and symptoms. As your child's symptoms decrease, the extra help or support can be removed gradually.



JOIN THE CONVERSATION ➡ [www.facebook.com/CDCHeadsUp](https://www.facebook.com/CDCHeadsUp)

TO LEARN MORE GO TO >> [WWW.CDC.GOV/CONCUSSION](https://www.cdc.gov/concussion)

Content Source: CDC's Heads Up Program. Created through a grant to the CDC Foundation from the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE).



# CONCUSSION FACT SHEET FOR ATHLETES



## CONCUSSION FACTS

- A concussion is a brain injury that affects how your brain works.
- A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body.
- A concussion can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.
- If you think you have a concussion, you should not return to play on the day of the injury and until a health care professional says you are OK to return to play.



## CONCUSSION SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Concussion symptoms differ with each person and with each injury, and may not be noticeable for hours or days. Common symptoms include:

- Headache
- Confusion
- Difficulty remembering or paying attention
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Feeling irritable, more emotional, or "down"
- Nausea or vomiting
- Bothered by light or noise
- Double or blurry vision
- Slowed reaction time
- Sleep problems
- Loss of consciousness

During recovery, exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration (such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games) may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse.

## WHY SHOULD I REPORT MY SYMPTOMS?

- Unlike with some other injuries, playing or practicing with concussion symptoms is dangerous and can lead to a longer recovery and a delay in your return to play.
- While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion.
- A repeat concussion in a young athlete can result in permanent damage to your brain. They can even be fatal.

*Michigan Department  
of Community Health*



**Rick Snyder, Governor**  
**James K. Haveman, Director**



## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

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### DON'T HIDE IT. REPORT IT.

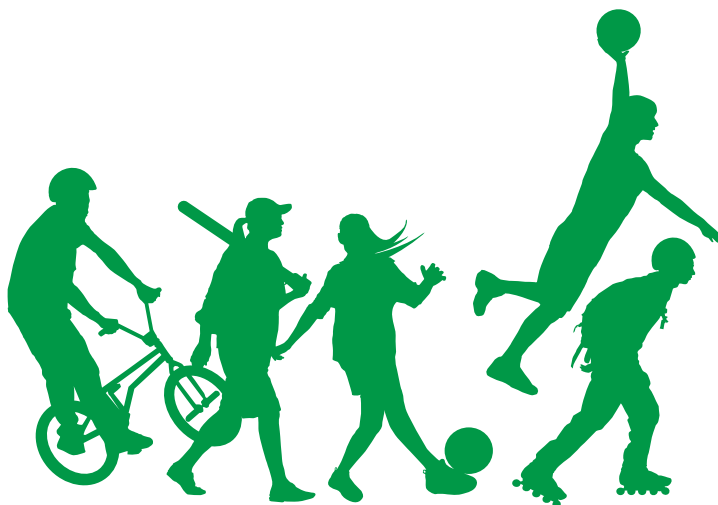
Ignoring your symptoms and trying to "tough it out" often makes symptoms worse. Tell your coach, parent, and athletic trainer if you think you or one of your teammates may have a concussion. Don't let anyone pressure you into continuing to practice or play with a concussion.

### GET CHECKED OUT.

Only a health care professional can tell if you have a concussion and when it's OK to return to play. Sports have injury timeouts and player substitutions so that you can get checked out and the team can perform at its best. The sooner you get checked out, the sooner you may be able to safely return to play.

### TAKE CARE OF YOUR BRAIN.

A concussion can affect your ability to do schoolwork and other activities. Most athletes with a concussion get better and return to sports, but it is important to rest and give your brain time to heal. A repeat concussion that occurs while your brain is still healing can cause long-term problems that may change your life forever.



► **"IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME,  
THAN THE WHOLE SEASON."**

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**HEADS UP**

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## A QUIZ FOR COACHES, ATHLETES, AND PARENTS

*Review the "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports" materials and test your knowledge of concussion.*

### Mark each of the following statements as True (T) or False (F)

1. A concussion is a brain injury.
2. Concussions can occur in any organized or unorganized recreational sport or activity.
3. You can't see a concussion and some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury.
4. Following a coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport, practicing good sportsmanship at all times, and using the proper sports equipment are all ways that athletes can prevent a concussion.
5. Concussions can be caused by a fall or by a bump or blow to the head or body.
6. Concussion can happen even if the athlete hasn't been knocked out or lost consciousness.
7. Nausea, headaches, sensitivity to light or noise, and difficulty concentrating are some of the symptoms of a concussion.
8. Athletes who have a concussion should not return to play until they are symptom-free and have received approval from a doctor or health care professional.
9. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems.

**ANSWER KEY:** 1. True; 2. True; 3. True; 4. True; 5. True; 6. True; 7. True; 8. True; 9. True

***It's better to miss one game than the whole season.***

For more information and to order additional materials **free-of-charge**, visit:

**[www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports](http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports)**



# PARENT & ATHLETE CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET



## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION?

Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury.

If an athlete reports one or more symptoms of concussion after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, s/he should be kept out of play the day of the injury. The athlete should only return to play with permission from a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.
- Athletes who have, at any point in their lives, had a concussion have an increased risk for another concussion.
- Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.



## SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE:

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not "feeling right" or is "feeling down"

## SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

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**"IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME  
THAN THE WHOLE SEASON"**



## CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. An athlete should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body s/he exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless, or agitated
- Has unusual behavior
- Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR ATHLETE HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, remove the athlete from play and seek medical attention. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says s/he is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.
2. Rest is key to helping an athlete recover from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working on the computer, and playing video games, may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be carefully managed and monitored by a health care professional.
3. Remember: Concussions affect people differently. While most athletes with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days, or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.

## WHY SHOULD AN ATHLETE REPORT THEIR SYMPTOMS?

If an athlete has a concussion, his/her brain needs time to heal. While an athlete's brain is still healing, s/he is much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes to recover. In rare cases, repeat concussions in young athletes can result in brain swelling or permanent damage to their brain. They can even be fatal.

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STUDENT-ATHLETE NAME PRINTED

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STUDENT-ATHLETE NAME SIGNED

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DATE

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PARENT OR GUARDIAN NAME PRINTED

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PARENT OR GUARDIAN NAME SIGNED

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DATE

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MDCH Director James K. Haveman

## **MEDICAL CLEARANCE TO RETURN TO PLAY**

The State of Michigan requires that a youth athlete, who has been removed from physical participation in an athletic activity, shall not return to physical activity until he or she has been evaluated by an appropriate health professional and receives written clearance<sup>1</sup> from that health professional authorizing the youth athlete's return to physical participation in the athletic activity. **This form is to be used after an athlete has been removed from an athletic activity due to a suspected concussion<sup>2</sup>.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Nature and extent of injury: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Medical clearance should only be provided after a graduated return to play plan<sup>3</sup> has been completed and the student has been symptom free at all stages. **The student must be completely symptom free at rest and during exertion prior to returning to full participation in physical activity.**

If concussion diagnosed, date student completed graduated return to play plan without recurrent symptoms: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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Print Health Professional Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: An "Appropriate health professional" means a health professional who is licensed or otherwise authorized to engage in a health profession and whose scope of practice within that health profession includes the recognition, treatment, and management of concussions.*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE NAMED STUDENT TO RETURN TO ATHLETIC ACTIVITY FOR FULL PARTICIPATION WITHOUT RESTRICTION.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> The organizing entity shall maintain this written clearance in a permanent file for the duration of that youth athlete's participation in athletic activity sponsored by or operated under the auspices of that organizing entity or until the youth athlete is 18 years of age.

<sup>2</sup> A "Concussion" is a type of traumatic brain injury as recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A concussion may cause a change in a person's mental status at the time of the injury including, but not limited to feeling dazed, disoriented, or confused, and may or may not include a loss of consciousness. A concussion may be caused by any type of accident or injury including, but not limited to the following: a fall, blow, bump or jolt to the head or body, the shaking or spinning of the head or body, or the acceleration and deceleration of the head.

<sup>3</sup> Return to play guidelines may be found at: [http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/return\\_to\\_play.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/return_to_play.html) and should only be administered by an appropriate health professional.